



# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Junior water right holders along lower Neosho River ordered to stop diverting**

TOPEKA—Low flows in the Neosho River between John Redmond Reservoir and a gaging station near Parsons prompted the chief engineer of the Kansas Department of Agriculture's division of water resources today to order junior water right holders to cease diversions under the provisions of the Kansas' minimum desirable streamflow law.

This is the first year that MDS administration on the lower Neosho River has been necessary since the law was passed in 1984. About 28 water rights are affected in Allen, Anderson, Coffey, Labette, Neosho, Wilson and Woodson counties.

Under the chief engineer's order, no water is to be diverted or pumped until flow in the Neosho River recovers. The order cites that, as of Sept. 4, actual flows at gaging stations near Parsons and Iola had been below minimum desirable streamflows for more than seven days. Minimum desirable flows are established in Kansas statutes.

To satisfy the needs of municipal and industrial users, the Cottonwood and Neosho River Basins Water Assurance District may release water stored in John Redmond Reservoir for their members. Those releases are protected to ensure the water reaches its intended users.

Before issuing the order, the chief engineer considered, among other things, the general hydrologic conditions affecting streamflow, the magnitude and duration of recent streamflows and the extent to which groundwater contributes to streamflow.

The MDS streamflow management tool is designed to balance water use among competing interests—quality, quantity, recreation and wildlife needs—during times of shortage. Kansas monitors 23 streams and rivers under the MDS program.